

MINNESOTA NOTES

by Dr. Jon M. Wilson

As a collector of Minnesota precancels as well as Perfins, I note a good deal of information that crosses the line between these two types of cancellations. For example, many users of dated precancels are unidentified. (It was required after July 1, 1938, that precancel users put their initials, the month and the year on each stamp above 6¢ denomination). By cross reference with the Perfin catalog, some of the users have been identified. Companies sophisticated enough to use Perfins also used dated precancels.

The Perfins of Minnesota seem to be rather scarce. The breakdown by Cain ratings is as follows:

A 4; B 10; C 54; D 32; E 25; None 1.

I do recall seeing a breakdown for all the Perfins in the rating list in a back issue of the Bulletin, but I have been unable to locate it.

I feel that Perfin D-73, D/M/IR (Duluth Missabe & Iron Range Rwy., Duluth, Minn.) does not deserve its "C" rating. In the last Perfins Club auction, for instance, I picked up all the copies I bid on--one of them at ten cents! I think the device was used more actively after 1954, as most of the copies appear on the Liberty series. When were the Cain ratings taken?

A recent listing in the Perfins Bulletin showed K-26 (KD) to be found postmarked "New Prague, Minn." A letter to the Chamber of Commerce in New Prague brought a courteous reply: "The initials 'KD' could be for 'Katolicky Delnik.' These are the Czech words for 'Catholic Workman,' a fraternal life insurance association which still maintains an office in New Prague." A letter to this association brought a nice reply from Mr. S. F. Wagner, Supreme Secretary since 1939: "I recall having been told that more than 50 years ago, when the organization was still very small, the treasurer was responsible for purchasing postage stamps for all of the officers. For identification of the postage which was to be used for Association correspondence, the perforation handstamp had been used. That practice had been discontinued in the late teens or early 20's. Where this so-called relic is, I do not know."

Needless to say, Mr. Wagner did not start too long after use of the perforator was discontinued, as my only copy of K-26 is on a 2¢ Washington Bicentennial stamp issued in 1932!